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Talking Points for the DCI
(27 September 1983)

If the cease-fire holds--a chancy proposition given factional animosities and the combatants' close proximity--President Gemayel and the leaders of the various Lebanese factional groups are to meet to discuss national reconciliation.

-- To our knowledge, no date or agenda has been set for the conference, although the press reports that Saudi Arabia will be the host country.

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-- Along with the President, Pierre Gemayel, Druze leader Walid Junblatt, Shia leader Nabih Barri, and Saudi and Syrian observers will be among those attending the conference.

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The reconciliation talks are likely to break down. Christian hardliners will urge President Gemayel to accept only minimal changes in the political system. Syria, on the other hand, will press the Muslims and Druze to hold out for their maximum demands.

-- Muslim and Druze leaders believe they have the Christians on the run, and will not be inclined to accept cosmetic changes that essentially preserve Christian hegemony.

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-- Christian hardliners probably believe that the US will support the Gemayel government even if it rejects Muslim and Druze demands for significant change.

-- Both sides will be tempted to resume military and terrorist activity in the hope of extracting concessions and intimidating their opponents.

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Although the cease-fire is generally holding, minor violations continue to occur; according to press reports, one Italian soldier was wounded today. The longer it takes to set a firm date for the reconciliation conference, the more precarious the cease-fire will become.

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-- Druze and Christian Lebanese Forces militia commanders already are criticizing publicly the cease-fire.

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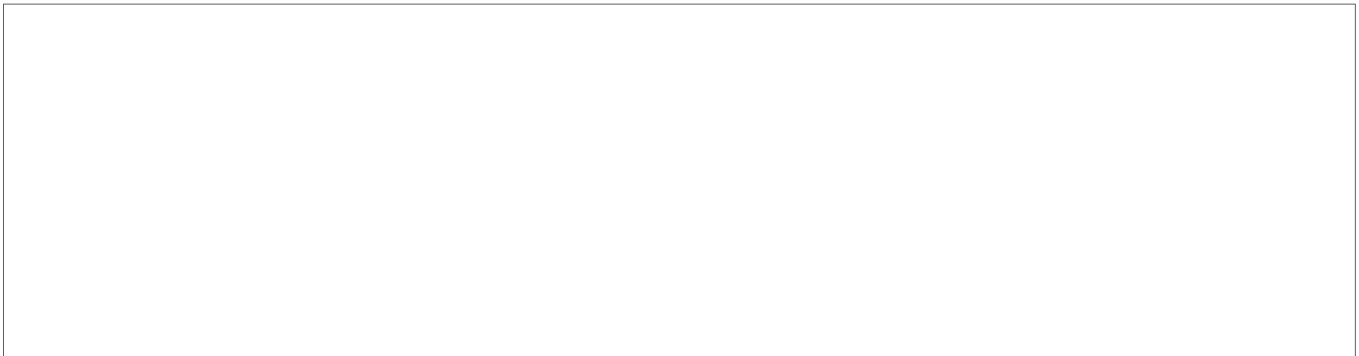
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-- The disputants committee which is supposed to work out the details of the cease-fire did not meet today as scheduled. The participants could not agree on a suitable location for their meeting. [REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: Talking Points for the DCI

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